



# News Release



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## **Shelby County Health Department Encourages Food Safety Guidelines During Power Outages**

MEMPHIS, TN – With the threat of winter weather approaching the Mid-South, the Shelby County Health Department (SCHD) is announcing food safety guidelines to help residents stay healthy and safe during potential power outages.

When frozen foods thaw, and refrigerated food warms, bacteria and other pathogens grow that can cause serious illnesses. If the power is out for less than four hours, the food in the refrigerator and freezer will be safe to consume. While the power is out, keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.

If the power is out for more than four hours, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following guidelines:

- Frozen foods: A freezer that is half full will hold food safely for up to 24 hours. A full freezer will hold food safely for 48 hours. Do not open the freezer doors unless absolutely necessary.
- Refrigerated foods: Place milk, other dairy products, meat, fish, eggs, gravy, and spoilable leftovers into a cooler surrounded by ice.
- Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of food right before cooking or eating. Throw away any food that has a temperature of more than 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

SCHD Environmental Section also recommends the following:

- Do not purchase food from a restaurant that is without power
- Do not purchase prepared sandwiches or deli/refrigerated items from retail food stores that are without power

Restaurants operating without the ability to properly maintain appropriate food temperatures are in direct violation of state food service law. To report a restaurant believed to be operating unsafely, please call (901) 222-6758 with the restaurant's name and address.

For up to date public health preparedness information follow @SCHDResponse.

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